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Action Research: A Clinical Case in Remedial Reading

Birdene Jane Cox

Fort Hays Kansas State College

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ACTION RESEARCH
A CLINICAL CASE IN REMEDIAL READING

being

A master's report presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

Birdene Jane Cox, B. S.

Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date May 27, 1957

Approved

Leann M. Kuhn
Major Professor

Ralph V. Boden
Chairman Graduate Council

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ACTION RESEARCH

A CLINICAL CASE IN REMEDIAL READING

Background

Since the writer is actively engaged in tutoring a fourth grade boy who has reading difficulty, the possibility of a problem being the outgrowth of this situation was considered. In light of the experiences and limitations of this writer, the decision was reached to develop a record of the procedures followed in working with the subject.

Background study, necessarily, began with the function and scope of this type of study. It was of interest to look into the past for early reasonings on the orderly search for truth. One of the more articulate writers, Francis Bacon, is quoted by Roberta Brinkley,¹

Authority, he held, should be tested by reason and experiment; one should not be satisfied merely with theoretical arguments; but with a critical temper of mind, a spirit of inquiry, and a willingness to defer judgment over a period of time, one should observe things as they are and base opinion upon facts, not words.

In the initial conference, the adviser and advisee agreed that conflicting opinions, studies, and publications are often

¹Brinkley, Roberta Florence. English Prose of the XVII Century. (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1951), p. 10.

frustrating and it was decided to attempt a positive approach to the problem of making this study an actual progression.

The Problem

In setting up the problem, it was necessary to propose a plan of action, try the plan or plans, gain evidence, and write the results. The report would be anecdotal, descriptive, and so organized as to give, as much as possible, a lucid and over-all picture of what had taken place. To maintain anonymity, the child would be given another name and the terms examiner, researcher, and other similar general references would be used.

The problem then became the factual account of an ongoing project in remedial instruction under competent guidance in the hope of arriving at assumptions and recommendations that would prove of value to others interested in a similar activity.

Limitations

The limitations in scope were due to the fact that the study was based on but one pupil. The basic data was subjective. It consisted of a way of submitting those involved to progressive circumstances and trying to sort out and judge whether or not there was a pattern of experience which other people could count on in somewhat similar circumstances.

It was understood that it would be possible to picture in detail only a fragment of the ongoing activity but it was felt that

the attempt to do so would fill a definite need.

A major difficulty of the project was the newness of the venture, a pioneering, because of limited published reports of action research. Also, it was in the nature of analyzing difficult human relations with problems that grow out of the interactions of human beings. The results were to be phrased in terms of human relationships with the hope that there would be, ultimately, some modification of human behavior.

Equipment was limited to the resources of the Curriculum Library and the use of the tape recorder. A seminar room was used without a proper desk, storage space, or the use of a chalkboard.

Action Research

DeYoung defines action research as, "careful, unbiased investigation of a problem through observation or demonstrated performance. It may involve the action participation of many persons. It usually is associated with or followed by movement or progress toward a goal."²

Action research was undertaken with, first, an appraisal of the writer's own attitude toward the research problem and toward herself in relation to it. Satisfactory statements of the personal challenge were found as follows:

Research is a personal venture which, quite aside from its social benefits, is worth doing for its direct contribution to one's own self-realization. It can be taken as a way of meeting life with the maximum of stops open to get out of experience its most poignant significance . . .

Knowing that there are internal and external blocks for the researcher to overcome, an attempt was made to analyze her own

²DeYoung, Chris A. Introduction to American Public Education. (third edition; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1955), p. 403.

³Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA. Research for Curriculum Improvement. 1957 Yearbook. (Washington 6, D. C.: A.S.C.D., a Department of the National Education Association, 1957), pp. 154-155.

feelings and ~~not not~~ consider them unimportant but to give them a full and challenging place. It was felt that there would be an increased sense of richness of life through cultivating a widening awareness of connections-taking-place. There is a connection between what is structuring on the inside as emptiness or need and what is structuring on the outside as suitable matching potentiality for fulfilling need.

The external blocks seemed to have been removed by the nature of the situation. Some internal inhibitors of freedom might still operate in this undertaking, such as a feeling of foredoomed failure, or that, if the venture were seemingly successful, other and future demands would be made that would prove to be beyond the ability of the researcher.

It became necessary to try to get at the negative feelings such as: feeling threatened when required to do research concerning matters about which there was already a feeling of insecurity, and believing that there was a lack of the necessary understanding and skill to make an end result that would be satisfactory in her own and in other people's eyes.

The researcher was encouraged and motivated by the belief of the coordinators in the worthwhileness of the attempt and decided that the effort to obtain meaningful findings would far outweigh the doubt and worry as to its excellence.

Since research is an excursion into the unknown, it was understood that there would be a need to take calculated risks.

One was the possible discouragement due to all of the questions that could be raised regarding the meaning and validity of the data and beliefs. Such questions could introduce technical or philosophical problems with which the researcher had not had the time or experience to deal.

It was realized that in the investigation of educational questions too definite and too positive answers are often sought, creating a problem too broad and complex. Naturally, the broad problems concern us most but it would seem advisable to curb the desire to overextend the range of inquiry.

Validation

In the investigation of methods by which a data-gathering process could be developed and carried out and the generally accepted standards for that process, two books, dealing with group procedures, were found to be useful, Alice Miel's Cooperative Procedures in Learning and Foshay and Wann's Children's Social Values. The method of developing a case study was the use of the case history, based on interviews, the Stanford-Binet test and the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty.

The researcher felt that confidence in the judgment and direction of the coordinators overcame the fears of making a poor start or a feeling of "social obligation." Certainly, the undertaking had all of the necessary feeling of freedom and the real

or fancied blocks were eliminated to some degree.

Case History

Rex was nine years old and in the fourth grade. His father was in two World Wars. The mother was a nurse. Rex had two sisters and a brother. The two younger children, a brother aged three and a sister thirteen months old, did not seem to present emotional problems but the older sister, eleven, was a threat to Rex's security as a student. The older sister was an especially good reader and the parents were proud of her. In a form of teasing, she called Rex "dumb."

The physical check-up was satisfactory. His eyes were checked in the fall and found to be normal. Psychological testing gave an intelligence report of dull-normal and a report of emotional problems. The I.Q. was 82.

In an interview, the father said that Rex was three years old when he was called to the Service for the second time, for a two-year period. The mother felt that Rex needed his father during those war years. Rex's retardation in school, his nervousness and short interest span caused his parents much concern.

The father took it upon himself to help his son with his school work. He reported that Rex was high strung in his attitude toward reading; that he pouted when his questions were not answered. The father thought that he asked too many questions and described himself as short-tempered as though it were a virtue. Asked why he thought Rex asked so many questions, he answered, "To get my goat." He then said that he terminated the reading when he lost his temper and so Rex was freed from the reading situation.

The father threatened Rex in order to get him to do his home work. Opinionated, anti-social (in the opinion of the interviewer, he doesn't like himself), the father blamed the school and said that he knew why his son did not do better in school. He said that Rex was a dreamer and that he was in a divided room and listened to the other class recite instead of doing his own work. The fact was determined that Rex was in a single grade at school so the father's criticism was unfounded.

The father said that Rex wanted his parents to visit school, that he had often asked them to do so. Under questioning he admitted, with some embarrassment, that they had never done so.

The father said that Rex had no special playmates, that he played but did not associate with groups. He had no interest in movies or TV. When he did watch TV, he identified himself so completely that its effect was adverse.

On November 28, 1956, the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty showed a median reading grade of 3; the rate was a low 2; and comprehension was low 4. Of the 220 Dolch Sight Words, 27 were missed. In the Phonetic Inventory, Rex knew the letter names, made a reversal on q, called all vowels by the short sound, except o, and missed 4 blends. He cooperated in the testing program in a negative manner. Open rebellion did not show except in rather anxious questioning and in a tense, fidgety approach to the reading situation.

In interviews, Rex and his father said that he liked to collect

rocks, fossils and shells; showed a little interest in baseball and basketball, and liked to build things.

Rex did not like to read. He had built up defenses against the reading situation and felt that it was a threat to him in some way. Under present circumstances, there did not seem much room for improvement except in a change of attitude.

The problem for the tutor was to take the student where he was, believe in the potential possibility of improvement, and work with a motivational and attitudinal point of view. The director strongly recommended that the program be set up so that much praise could be given for effort. Rex needed to be in a situation where his defenses would not need to be used, where some one was interested in him as he was, where he need feel no stigma of failure.

Report of Sessions with the Child

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Dec. 3, 1956

Tutor chose a story about a boy and a pilot.

Rex cooperated but in a passive manner. Did not know the word pilot. Had trouble with the word for a session or two because he did not use long vowel sounds. Did not associate the word with the occupation, the pictures or his own ambitions, evidently.

Worked on long and short vowel sounds, unvoiced the, and sight words missed in the test.

Rex was tense, squirmed and moved his feet a great deal during the reading process.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Dec. 4, 1956

Reviewed compound words and long and short vowel sounds.

Used unvoiced the some of the time. (The school was using this.) The tutor withheld correction or compulsion on this problem.

Set a problem: read to find the answer to a given question.

Satisfaction achieved for both student and the tutor.

Miscalled word.

Rex said, "That didn't make sense." This expression was encouraged by the tutor.

Asked to use the voice to put more meaning in the sentences read.

Made a commendable effort.

Dec. 6, 1956

Chose a Science workbook to use at the next session.

Said that he could not read his Geography at school.

Continued to make a good effort to change the.

Reminded tutor that he knew thought.

Compared through and thought again.

Cut car models from magazines. When Rex missed a suffix, the tail of a car was snipped off.

The first time, Rex was startled. He was always interested when the device was used from time to time.

Finished a story.

Interested in everything but sighed and squirmed when he had to begin reading.

Tutor told Rex that she knew of a good story about machines and wondered if he would like to read it the next time.

Expressed interest and said that he liked the story just finished. (Had told of crossing a vacant lot on the way to school in which machines were now working to prepare for a new building.)

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Worked on telling things in sequence.

Recall was quite good.

December 10, 1956

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel, p. 190. We Are Neighbors. Chicago: Ginn and Co., 1948.

Still "fights the book" even on material where he misses only a word or two on a page.

Asks questions and makes observations.

Doesn't seem to feel the need to read.

Gave an excited response when he discovered the answer to a motivating question.

Wonderful to work with. Follows directions. Asks for help when he needs it. Suggests activities. Doesn't complain, directly. Takes suggestions well.

December 11, 1956

Worked on word endings.

Still grabs at a word. Knows the beginning but says anything for the last part.

Remembered sunshine.

Showed pleasure in his recall.

We explored the campus. We started to make trips to the museum after the reading period.

He seemed interested.

Tells stories.

Tells any sort of story to circumvent having to face the problem of reading.

Tutor feels uneasy about the situation. Is not sure of the type of response needed on her part. Decided to act interested and hope for the best.

December 13, 1956

Sighed a deep sigh when we started with the book.

A characteristic sign.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Reviewed sight words.

Volunteered on review of: threw
caught, pilot.

Asked tutor to go to the green-
house with him to see the
cactus plants and the banana
tree.

A satisfactory experience.

Picked out the next story.

Didn't seem to really care what
he read.

Said that he teased one of
his friends about being a
Catholic.

Has prejudices.

Said that a girl who sat near
him in school was dumb.

December 17, 1956

Made comparisons.

Rex showed that he has ability to
do this on his own.

Did not point.

Seemed a good sign.

Still squirmed.

Has trouble with suffixes.

Remembered a reference at the last
session that words are like cars
in that they have a prefix, a
root, and a suffix, sometimes,
similar to the grill, body, and
tail of a car.

Rex makes associations.

It is quite evident that he visualizes.
Slows the rate but is a valuable
characteristic.

December 18, 1956

Extraneous remarks.

Did not volunteer this type of remark
until toward the end of the period.
This seemed like progress.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Home in Many Lands

Gave up this project when it was found to be too time consuming.

Word Tree. Words that needed drill were typed on leaves. When they were well learned, Rex pasted them on a tag-board tree.

When he had learned them, Rex took a lively interest in coloring the leaves.

December 20, 1956

Fourth Grade book.

Made fair progress. Capable of sounding, sometimes with help, the words he didn't know.

Pictures

Notices details in pictures and associates them with the story.

Lip movement

Tutor explained that it slowed his reading rate.

He said, "I'm dumb in Reading and I'm dumb in Arithmetic, too."

Seems to accept this attitude toward himself.

Completed change on the and a.

Did this without urging.

Fights the book.

Still squirms and would rather do anything than read.

Christmas Party.

Mentioned more than once that he and his father had gone to the Social Building where his father had coffee and he was allowed to choose a candy bar.

On the way to the Social Building, Rex admitted that it was the Tiger Grill, instead, where they had gone.

A Christmas tree, gas logs burning, Dr. Stout's music class sitting at grouped tables singing Christmas Carols, TV, ping pong, and a holiday spirit gave the Social Building a festive air.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Rex's enjoyment was passive.
 However, when the whistle blew
 when he should leave, he seemed
 reluctant.

CHRISTMAS VACATION

Just before Christmas, the father telephoned the director to ask about Rex's progress. He was told that, as far as could be determined, Rex was responding to the program. Almost immediately after that, the principal who was cooperating in the project called to ask about the student. The next day, he called to say that in a conference with Rex's teacher he had learned that Rex's attitude toward his school work had improved in every way.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

During Christmas vacation the
 tutor sent two extra-large
 colored postal cards from
 Arizona.

Rex expressed pleasure and said
 that he read them without help.

Rex's interests are in line with those of a mining engineer,
 a geologist, or a forest ranger.

Gave Rex petrified wood for
 which he had expressed a
 desire.

Seemed gratified. Was interested
 in the strata.

Gave him a piece of asbestos
 from the mines near Globe,
 Arizona.

Interested. Told him it was used
 as insulation to keep out cold
 or to keep heat in. Did not tell
 him it would not burn for fear he
 would experiment.

RECORD

Brought a desert cactus. We split one stem or leaf (we had learned that the cactus' stem and leaf are the same) to see the amount of water stored.

January 10, 1957

Gave an informal test.

February 4, 1957

Two week interval at mid-term. Rex came in with an anticipatory smile. Said "I'm glad to be back here."

After a general exchange of greeting, plunged into the work. Took the one-hundred word section which had been used as the informal silent reading test at the two-week's old session. Rex had spent over 4 minutes and responded with only one fact and could add only one fact on questioning.

Gave Rex a lava bomb. He held it with care and traced the swirls with a caressing touch. Talked about the chalky sea that covered Kansas over 50 million years ago and left rock deposits.

ANALYSIS

Rex reported at the next session that his father had said the split leaf would not die.

Rex was still unable to perform on 4th grade level.

His response and attitude were so good that the examiner felt that it was a rich and rewarding experience.

Gratifying to the tutor.

Fidgeting returned. He gradually worked a chair at one end of the table around to a place beside him. He digressed time after time.

Shows respect for the wonders of nature.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Elated by the success of the informal testing session, the tutor expected to be able to concentrate on a definite, systematic type of instruction.

Reminded by the director that this was an experimental case.

Seeming withdrawal from the situation.

Several factors occurred to the tutor as possibly being responsible,

- not allowing enough time to again establish rapport,
- a frown of concentration, due to the fact that the tutor felt that the path was straight and clear as to what should be accomplished, the method and procedure,
- studying the child with a detached air during the first meeting. This was corrected almost at once as his reaction was noticed.
- a time of regression had not been allowed for. The tutor was applying pressure and the child was responding with all of the old unfavorable symptoms.

Found that empathy had to be restored. Tutor was putting material ahead of the child.

Child reverted to previous habits, wiggling, diverting the conversation, mentioning physical aches and pains -- this time a sore back from a slap administered by a playmate in "Pump, Pump, Pull-Away."

February 5, 1957

Took time to visit. Asked about Reading, Rex said, "It's my best one."

The tutor felt encouraged.

The tutor attempted to set an arbitrary level of instruction. Fourth grade level.

Having been again reminded by the director that this was an experimental program removed the mental block and enabled the tutor to re-set the goals.

RECORD

Re-set the goals: to use material that could be read without too much strain, to slow the pace to the child's most responsive point, and to avoid a feeling of insistence that a certain amount of material must be covered.

Selection and procurement of books:
Horn and Shield. Making New Friends. (Chicago: Ginn and Co.) Level 2.
Bond, Guy L. and Others. Stories From Everywhere. (Chicago: Lyons and Carnahan. Classmate Edition.) Level 2.
Bond, Guy L. and Others. Once Upon a Storytime. (Chicago: Lyon and Carnahan). Classmate Edition. Level 2.

February 7, 1957

The tutor took a few minutes to visit at the beginning of the session.

A sigh preceded the reading.

Rex chose the book and story, Garden Plans. Second grade level.

Commented on the word don't when he came to it.

ANALYSIS

The director again counseled that progress could continue only when evidence showed a need for a certain type of instruction or if interest and application grew out of the material and situation.

Interest was higher when Rex accompanied the tutor to the Curriculum Library and helped in the choosing of the books and in the returning after the session.

Recalls interest in past sessions. Says, for example, "We haven't read in this book lately," and we again read Science.

Rex does some browsing and the tutor tries to be alert to his interests and to guide his selection when necessary. Usually it requires only a confirmation that his final choice is suitable.

Perceptible decrease of tension.

This was characteristic.

Read the entire story with little help.

They were studying contractions at school.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

With second grade material the tutor could keep the pace moving more easily.

Worked some on the way to read direct and indirect quotations.

Rex said that he was doing better in school.

Got only 17 x's on his report card. Said that a girl in his room got 22.

Used Hay and Wingo's Reading with Phonics. (Chicago: J.B. Lippincott Co.)

Rex did this cheerfully. The tutor praised this effort.

Studied through a page of ou, ow, oi, and oy words.

Conversation:

Rex: "Do you suppose the director will come in and see us today?"

Tutor: "No, I saw him leave. He has a lot of classes this semester."

Rex: "I expect he was tired."

Tutor: "Yes, teaching is hard work. He said he would come in when he has time. He is really interested in how you are getting along."

Reviewed silent p in cup-board. Added silent t in castle. Reviewed qu sound. Had trouble again with heard.

Cooperated very well. Tutor experienced a feeling of gratitude toward the student.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Imagination

Seems subject to morbid fears.
Tutor can't decide whether
these are normal or show a need
for reassurance.

February 11, 1957

Rex did everything he could
think of to postpone read-
ing.

At one time there was a suggestion of
hostility (or so the tutor feared.)
The tutor experienced a chill of
apprehension; wondered what could be
done if the child expressed open
rebellion to the reading situation.

Worked on phrasing.

Praised every good effort.

Chose "The Freight Train."
Horn and Shield. Making
New Friends. (Chicago:
Ginn and Co.,) 1940.

This went off quite well. Several
digressions to talk about the
pictures. At the next session
discuss the pictures thoroughly
before starting to read.

Rex told of a classmate who had
trouble pronouncing though.

Tutor: "Weren't you glad you knew the
word?"

Rex nodded, with a smile. Had worked
on though and although.

At the close of the period.
Rex said that next Thursday
was a special day and that
he had something for the
tutor. Said he wanted to
bring it today but his mother
said to wait until Valentine's
Day.

The tutor said that she had been
thinking about him, too.

The director had again urged much
praise for the boy as it seem -
ed to be a basic need. The tutor
found that by holding the thought
in mind that there were many more
opportunities to praise sincerely
than had been expected.

The tutor was sure that this had an
immediate favorable effect.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

The subjects Rex uses for digressions do not serve as a link between himself and the tutor.

Must feel some deep need to communicate.

Tutor wonders if using a warmer response in discussing story ideas might help. The kind Rex evidently wants when he says, "I hurt my finger."

Tutor decided to remember that a warmer approach than in a classroom can be used because jealousy is not a factor.

Response to praise.

Rex has an innate dignity. When that is apparent he seems at ease with himself and his environment.

Drilled long vowel sounds.

Good effort on part of pupil.

Rex approaches and carries out drill on a page of phonics better than he responds to the reading situation.

Tutor was at a loss to account for this. Director suggested that he feels more confidence in his ability to handle the phonics.

Types of digression.

His family.
How he gets hurt.
Colorado mountains.

Evasions.

No longer volunteers information that seems questionable. The first time he did this, the director insisted on checking with the school which proved the information wrong.

February 12, 1957

Reviewed aw and an words.

Does this with quite a bit of zest.

Guessing.

Admitted that he sometimes guesses. Tutor had suggested that that might be the reason Rex miscalled words. Feels that since he admitted doing this that they were probably on a firmer basis. Tutor usually points out the differences in configuration of the new word and the substituted word.

No apparent progress. The tutor felt that both enjoyed the session more, however.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

February 14, 1957

Valentine and a box of creamy home-made fudge.

Rex's smile as he handed them to her made the tutor feel humble. She wanted to be a good teacher.

Tutor had a Valentine gift for Rex, too.

Finished the story of "The Freight Train." Ibid., p. 152.

Talked about the ideas and events in the story a great deal. Started on a test at the end of the story with little enthusiasm but picked up in interest. Sighed several times.

Picked out a new story and started on it.

The tutor thought she had detected weariness before this and did not push the new work. Monday's start should have interest value.

Mentioned Spelling words.

Worked on those he mentioned, both orally and written. Talked about their characteristics. Looked up electric in the Dictionary for division into syllables.

Often seems tired.

Begins reading hour after a full day of school. Sometimes has to walk quite a distance to the College.

February 18, 1957

Finished The Swinging Bridge.

Located Mexico on the map. Made a notation that we had read a story about that country.

Asked Rex if he had crossed the swinging bridge in the Hays Park. Related his experience to that of Marcos, the Indian boy in Mexico.

Gave Rex a Canadian nickel.

This is a follow-up of his interest in coins in the dictionary. Marked Canada to indicate the coin collection.

Collecting is a solitary habit. The tutor hopes that this shared interest will be of benefit to Rex.

Still sighs, fidgets and

The director reminded the tutor that

RECORD

ANALYSIS

loses his place.

what she does is more important to the reading situation than how she does it. The child will absorb confidence and satisfaction if that is the way the tutor feels about the procedure.

Rex mentioned that they were reading about guppies in High Roads, fourth grade reader.

Tutor asked him to read to her the parts of the story he liked best. He read one short paragraph and lost interest.

This took place in the Curriculum Library which no one was using at the time.

Rex was more interested in watching the men paint the knot-holes in the trees. The basement seminar room, with the blinds closed, is best. The outside world still holds more interest for Rex than any printed page.

Reviewed sight words missed in Part I, Dolch Basic Sight Word Test, February 11.

Had missed 12. Knew them on review.

Read two pages of riddles and one of "Do You Know These Colors?"

Asked to choose a new story, Rex looked at all of the pictures in two books before he settled on one.

Ran out of time.

Tutor withheld completion of a project with a surprise ending and reminded Rex that he took too long to choose his next story.

Notices details.

Tutor thinks this shows a mental alertness.

Postponed the reading situation as long as possible.

Tutor surprised at his amount of skill in doing this.

Had to walk from school to the College.

Tutor has no way of knowing if the father's failure to get his son reacted on the tutoring session.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

February 21, 1957

Rex tried to postpone the reading situation

The tutor asked him if he had ever heard of a spider monkey. Told him he could read about one in the story.

Made a poor start. Got up and closed the door.

It was agreed that it was better with the door closed.

Still turned pages to look at the pictures.

Settled on which was the spider monkey in the pictures.

Took time to discuss the pictures more thoroughly.

Tutor felt that this was time well spent.

Reminded Rex that he couldn't complete the frog project until he had read the whole story.

Had no way of knowing whether or not this had any effect.

Rex counted the pages to be read in the story.

Interest was poor at first but increased.

Rex laughed out loud, unaffectedly, during the reading of the story.

This was the first time that the tutor had heard him laugh like that. Experienced a lift of spirits.

Dallied over choosing a new story. Picked reader, On Cherry Street, first grade reader, because he like it. Said he had read it before.

Tutor is anxious to see, at the next session, if he can read it with ease. Hopes that his interest continues so she will have a basis for judging.

Read the life cycle of a toad, a frog, and a salamander.

This was liberally illustrated and short. Tutor made this a cooperative effort and took away all strain so that Rex would be unhampered.

Finished making the frog.

Rex said, "That's neat!"

With the aid of a rubber band, the frog would jump.

Rex showed much satisfaction with it.

Rex said that his mother had told him to tell the tutor that she is a nurse.

This was discussed rather impersonally. Mentioned that she worked at night.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Rex lingered when saying,
"Good-bye."

Tutor felt that the session had
been unusually enjoyable.

February 25, 1957

Tutor's attitude.

Decided to check own attitude.
Tutor realized that she was
worrying about techniques and
where she thought the child
should be. Needed to think more
about the child's actual performance.

Read three stories.

Rex always wanted to count the pages.

First Grade Reader.

Tutor suggested another book for the
next session. Rex seemed reluc-
tant to leave it.

Has On Cherry Street at
home.

This was the first book that he has
wanted to continue in of any that
he has mentioned as having one at
home.

Noticed rhyming words twice.

At the last session Rex was
given a copy of the story he
had dictated, The Museum. It
was understood that he would
read it to his Mother. Tutor
asked for her reaction.

He said that he had not shown it to
her.

Gave him a piece of rose quartz. He said, "It's a beauty."

Looked up quartz in the
dictionary.

He noticed the transparency of the
stone which agreed with the
description. Tutor made the
association, however.

Gave Rex six more stamps for
his Wild Life collection.

Rex said that he was rearranging
this, putting all butterflies
together, etc.

Reading on first grade level.

Tutor feels sense of failure in this
fact.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Parting.

Tutor: "Good-bye. I'll see you tomorrow."

Rex: "I'll be seeing you."

Relaxed. Pleasant.

February 26, 1957

On Cherry Street

Wanted to read in the book. Said it was a first grade book. Didn't seem to care.

Showed Rex a tachistoscope, home-made.

Picked out phrases to use next time. This was a cooperative effort.

Mentioned Looking Ahead.

Went to the Curriculum Library to get one, Grade Three, level one. He wanted to read a humorous poem about fishing. Said he would read two pages.

Chose stories for the next session.

Discussed how to pronounce the proper name.

Summer school.

Said that his mother wants him to go to summer school but that he doesn't want to. He is not going. He said that if he went it would be for the third year.

Experience story.

Said he read the story about The Museum to his mother and daddy last night after supper. The impression he gave was that it was satisfactory. Said we forgot to mention the big clock and the Nurse Dolls. Agreed that we could go back again sometime.

Question: Why did Rex want to read in a First Reader?

Tutor wondered if he wanted to experience success.

Self doubts.

Tutor wondered if she were guiding the student, or pushing him.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

February 28, 1957

Rex had a cold.

He said that he wasn't sick but he was physically below par.

Rex had a chance to choose the new story.

The tutor wasn't sure, at the last session, whether or not she had applied to much pressure in the selection of the new unit.

Rex seemed satisfied to continue. Thinking that the proper names might be a hindrance, the tutor consistently gave help with those.

The period proved enjoyable.

Rex read riddles and rhymes. He made up some rhymes.

This was his response to the suggestion of the director that he be encouraged to dictate material that would have meaning for him.

The attempt to make up rhymes was not at all successful. The two that were finished were too much the work of the tutor. It seemed likely that Rex did not find them satisfying.

Another attempt should be made. Should try to find out his motive and help him to achieve results satisfactory to him.

The tutor was pleased with his manner of reading the two composed. Was surprised at the smoothness. Both had in mind, at the time, that they would be recorded.

Rather long pauses in the reading of the story.

The tutor would begin to think that Rex was having difficulty only to find that he was checking story fact with the picture or making another association.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

March 4, 1957

Omission

Skipped line. This happens quite often.

To and too in sentence.

Noticed these and commented,
"Different kinds of tu's."

Many pauses to go back and check.

Unsure of himself. Tutor told him he was right more often than he was wrong and to go ahead and finish a sentence before looking back. He could then tell if it sounded right.

Rhymes.

The first one was unsuitable. Made one about a boat. Needed much help to find a rhyming word. He wanted to draw and color a boat. Did so after the reading period.

Movement of the feet during the reading program.

The tutor felt encouraged by the appearance of relaxation. This requires further observation.

Flu.

Had had the flu over the week-end. Still looked pale and had a cold.

March 5, 1957

Rex first looks at every picture.

Rex likes to picture read. The director suggested that his ability to do so be put to a test by comparing the story he constructs with the actual narrative.

Noticed The Swinging Bridge which had been read the week before. The tutor said, "That was a good story." Rex said, "I loved it."

Response much less superficial than formerly.

Tutor feels that she is learning better when and how to support Rex in his reading.

Fidgeting seemed less than usual.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Gave Rex a piece of Fool's Gold. Some time is spent in learning the names of rocks and how they are formed.

There is a sustained interest in his rock collection.

Visited the museum at the end of the period. Found a large rock display which had not previously been examined. Asked questions, some of which could be answered by the labels.

Made more of an effort to read the labels. Tutor gave immediate help so that his interest would not be hindered by the reading difficulty.

Pupil only now showing signs of a normal behavior pattern. Had been passive before, cooperated and did not show open rejection of the reading situation. These factors still operate but Rex's responses are less inhibited. The tutor feels that they cannot make real progress until they are able to meet the reading process on a natural basis.

Attitude of the tutor toward the student: likes him but does not find him appealing.. Disappointed at first because the intelligence score indicated that he was working at, perhaps, maximum level as it was. Had hoped for a subject with an intelligence quotient above performance level. Rex's cooperation and response made up for the disappointment, however.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

March 7, 1957

Used recorder. Suggested himself that he announce, "Rhymes by Rex." Read a story section silently and then on the tape. Read the next section orally, without preparation.

In the opinion of the tutor, the second section was the better of the two.

Tutor: "This has taken us quite a while. Are you tired? Do you want to take Part II of the Basic Sight Word Test now, as we had planned to do today?"

The tutor was surprised by the exuberant reply.

Rex: "Uh-huh. Just like Charles Van-Doren, he goes for everything!"

Dolch Basic Sight Word Test Part II. Missed 5. Did not complete this part of the initial test on Nov. 28, 1956.

Unable to complete the test because of fatigue and lack of interest.

On above test, Rex noticed that the word wash had the previous word was in it.

The tutor almost counted an error of hesitation on the next word shall. However, she was delighted with this evidence of word analysis. This was not the first time it had been displayed. The tutor decided to watch for future chances to capitalize on it. Rex's concentration was good throughout the test.

The tutor is becoming increasingly aware of the fact that talking and listening to children is an art achieved only by constant practice.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

March 11, 1957

Studied the 17 words missed on the Dolch Basic Sight Word Lists with a home-made tachistoscope. Missed 3. These words have been missed consistently, hunt for hurt, watch for which, butter for better.

Passive.

Finished reading, "The Airplane Ride." There were 12 questions at the end about the pictures which were unusually good. Had trouble with the word left, although he was able to figure it out. Missed it twice.

This session seemed to have appeal for Rex.

Gave Rex a colored picture post card of "Castle Rock" in Gove County. He said, "I think that's a beautiful picture." He read, with some help, every word and number on the reverse side, of his own accord. Asked questions and commented on what the sea had evidently done to the rocks.

To the tutor, it seemed that the entire session was more free from strain than at any time previously. She seemed to see Rex, perhaps for the first time, forgetting himself and engaging in the activities naturally. The relief from strain was a welcome comfort to the tutor.

March 12, 1957

Rex chose to read, orally, the new section of the story.

The tutor felt that his active interest was engaged only in new material. To re-read is like drinking a bottle of soda pop that has been opened a week.

Rex read: "Naki put an arrow into his bow."
He asked, "Why did he do that?"
"Why do you think he did it?" asked the tutor.
Rex: "Because he was scared?"

The tutor was pleased to have Rex thinking ahead instead of back.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Read: "The water looked black, too." Reacted: "Yee-ii!"

The tutor was delighted with the evidence of visual perception.

Decided that it was good for Rex to read in a situation where he could express his emotions freely.

Read: "They were surprised when they heard a big noise."

Opportunity for praise with a genuine ring of sincerity. Felt that Rex couldn't help but feel a sense of accomplishment.

Tutor: "Do you remember when we first started that you had a lot of trouble with surprised and noise? You read it right off today."

Surprised and noise are on the Word Tree.

Tried to interest Rex in choosing a story on the third grade level for the next session.

Failed in this attempt. He preferred the second grade book we were using.

The session again seemed free from stress. Rex does not now keep glancing for signs of approval. Body strain seemed less.

March 18, 1957

Rex read: ". . . ninth day of the ninth month."

He said, "Lots of 'th', 'th' sounds."

Another example of comparison and analysis which was gratifying. As mentioned before, it slows rate, which is to Rex's disadvantage in competition. It illustrates his application and perseverance, however. Performing at capacity, perhaps.

Tutor: "We aren't getting any more words on the leaves for our Word Tree. You are able to figure them out."

Rex: "I didn't know dolphin."

Tutor: "We will look that up in the dictionary and see a picture of it."

Rex's expressions of curiosity concerning the story of the Chinese kites were delightful. Rex is beginning to seem like another person. The relationship between the tutor and the child can be more sensed than expressed. This makes analysis more difficult.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Read 10 pages.

The tutor felt that she was beginning to set up unreal and arbitrary standards in stressing accomplishment according to amount of reading covered. Decided to discontinue this practice.

March 19, 1957

Rex wanted to explore.

When he settled down to the reading situation, his performance was very satisfactory. Still second grade level, however.

Saw a copy of "My Little Red Story Book", Ginn pre-primer.

Wanted to read it. Read it all at the end of the session. The tutor was a little puzzled by his absorption in the book.

Chose We Are Neighbors.
Chicago: Ginn and Co.

Wanted to read rhymes from this book. They are reading poems at school. He read with interest and picked out the rhyming words on his own initiative.

Tutor: "You have been missing cut and hurt on the Sight Word Test but you read them right off today in the story."

Accepts praise passively, seemingly.

March 21, 1957

Dolch suffix wheels.

Rex took an immediate interest in the wheels. Knew most of the root words on the easier wheels. The addition of the Dolch materials was a big help and proved interesting to the child.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

"The Beaver at Work," p. 176.
Bond, Guy L. and Others,
Stories From Everywhere,
Classmate Edition.

Rex asked, "How could the
beavers keep the water out
of their lodges?"

Tutor: "We will have to read
and find out."

Later. Rex: "Those look
like stones on top of the
beaver lodge. How could
they get them up there?
Oh, we'll have to read
to find out."

March 23rd would be his birth-
day. Saw that the tutor had
a present for him.

The whistle blew before he
had finished the Dolch
Syllable Game.

Rex cheerfully acquiesced in
turning to the reading situ-
ation to find answers to his
questions.

Fidgeting returned and extraneous
remarks. The tutor felt that
this was due, in part, to the
fact that an arbitrary goal had
been set. The story had 18 pages.
It was agreed that 9 would be
read that day. The goal was
discarded.

Rex, also, wanted time to pass so
that he could see his gift.

He insisted on finishing the game.
Was meticulous about keeping
track of the pairs.

When he saw the plastic model air-
plane, he became so interested in
exploring its possibilities that
it was hard to get him started
on his way home.

The tutor is not especially interested
in rocks and jet fighter planes but
finds the child's reactions fascinat-
ing to watch.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

March 26, 1957

Rex brought a painstakingly written note of thanks for the birthday gift.

"A Visit With Flat Tail,"

Ibid., p. 169.

Rex came to a page without a picture. Said, "No picture," and began to count the remaining pages.

Rex said that his father helped him put his plastic jet fighter together. They went to Duckwall's basement to get the cement. He said that they did not have the stars and bars on yet and that he might bring it Thursday. His mother suggested the writing of the thank-you note, according to Rex.

The tutor had noticed before that Rex often paused when he came to a page of solid type. Because he counted the pages, she decided to suggest that the amount of reading was not the important thing. She told him that the object was to read the story and enjoy it. He, then, went on through two full pages. There is little doubt but what the thinking in advance of the amount of reading to be covered dulls expectancy.

The tutor wondered if the boy and the father achieved a feeling of harmony in working at this together.

All barriers seemed to be down. The tutor felt that she had the complete confidence of the pupil.

Rex's letter:

Addressed to:

Fort Hays State Campus
Rarick Hall
Hays, Kansas

Hays, Kansas
March 23, 1957

Dear _____

I want to thank you for the nice birthday gift. Robert and I are playing in the snow today. I hope you are enjoying your'e week-end.

Rex

P.S. Thank's again.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

March 28, 1957

Dolch Syllable Game. Used the prefix cards.

Rex played the game with enthusiasm. Became more animated when the tutor took part and claimed the pairs which he missed.

"Flat Tail Takes a Walk,"
Ibid., p. 189.

Although it was frustrating that the reading level was not higher, it was evident that this was Rex's performance level.

Rex brought the assembled jet plane. Said that his father was going to put on the stars and bars and showed where they belonged.

Said that Hobby Day was coming soon at school.

He was proud and happy that he had a rock and wild-life stamp collection to take to show.

Rex reported that Hays was adopting the name of "The Red Bud City."

On April 1, 1957, the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test, Primary II, Battery: Form B, was given. Reading completion was 3-10; paragraph reading was 4-3; and vocabulary, 3-4. This was not a timed test but it took two sessions to cover it as progress was slow and laborious. Rex noticed the change from large type to small and, when he began to tire, he paused several times to count the paragraphs remaining.

Summary

The action research covered a period of four months. The remedial program began with the attempt to find the child's level and to start instruction there. It was recognized throughout that Rex's performance would be somewhat limited by the intelligence factor according to the results of the Stanford-Binet test. By means of interviews and observation of Rex's behavior, it seemed that emotional factors also entered into the problem. The home situation had a part, possibly, because of sibling rivalry and the attitude of the parents toward Rex's slowness.

Since it was felt that Rex's problem in reading might stem from things entirely outside reading, his interest in nature, collecting, and far-away lands was seized upon and built up, relating it to reading whenever possible. A definite attempt was made to surround a word presenting difficulty with real feeling and with ideas.

Although the attempt to raise the reading level in four months did not seem strikingly successful, Rex seemed better adjusted. Throughout, there seemed to be evidence that, as was first estimated, Rex was working at capacity. This was the expressed idea of the public school teacher and she was interested in the confirmation of her opinion. However, she thought, as have the remedial workers, that with extra help he might improve. The school had obtained neither a measure of intelligence nor had done any diagnostic testing of reading difficulty other than the Weekly Reader Tests.

To begin with, Rex was passive and uninterested in the reading situation. Progress seemed indicated when he took an active part in the use of the recorder; when he laughed, with pleasure, at the story of the spider monkey; and when he showed initiative in the construction of the experience story and the making of rhymes.

Other emotional reactions to story ideas which were encouraging were excited comments and exclamations, trying to figure out in advance the outcome of a story or situation, and evidences of curiosity. To read to find answers to questions that arose out of the material was accepted by him as a satisfactory goal.

Rex never attempted to avoid the tutoring session. He showed anticipation and a cooperative attitude. At the beginning of every session, he had something to share -- a picture he had

drawn, a package of gum, or pretty marbles to show. He volunteered information each week on his progress in spelling.

He expressed satisfaction with the book, Stories From Everywhere, Level Two, Classmate Edition, and the tutor decided to stay with the material that seemed to have meaning for him and which he was able to handle without too much strain until such time as he showed signs of being able and willing to attempt more difficult work. The tape recorder brought out how laborious the reading situation was for him.

When the mother participated by sending home-made fudge for Valentine's Day and the father helped Rex assemble the jet fighter plane which he received as a birthday gift from the tutor, she felt that the parents had demonstrated a more positive reaction to the reading program. Rex had never missed a tutoring session which was further proof of their interest.

Whereas Rex had been apathetic toward the choosing of reading material, on February 26, 1957 he began to take an active interest in the choice of the next story and that attitude persisted.

The experience story, "The Museum," which he dictated and the tutor typed for him was a device which received Rex's cooperation and a passive interest until he surprised the tutor by suggesting that she might want to send it to her mother. This was carried out and the resulting letter in response was read to him.

On a day when it seemed that a blizzard was imminent, the

tutor suggested that she would take Rex home soon after his arrival. He evaded the situation in much the same way as he had previously tried to evade the reading situation. It was agreed to go ahead with the tutoring session and hope for the best as far as the weather was concerned.

On March 12, 1957, Rex began asking the type of question that had more motivating value than any that the tutor could devise. This reaction to story material continued. The material gained in meaning. For instance, Rex thought that "Bora Bora" was a very odd name for an island and expressed the desire to be able to do some of the things that boys who live on South Sea islands are able to do.

Rex had a good foundation in phonics. The suffixes were still a little weak and he needed encouragement to use the long vowel sounds. The second time through he knew all of the words, or could figure them out, on the Dolch Prefix game.

Rex continued to react to a page of solid type without pictures by stopping to count the remaining pages in the story, as recounted on March 26, 1957, but the day came, toward the end of the four month's period, when he read the first section of a story, noticed a full page, counted the remaining pages and said, matter-of-factly, "Well, I might as well read a whole story today." This he did, without pressure or extra praise, and the atmosphere of the session was most satisfactory.

A change in tutoring rooms for the final recorded sessions brought out the fact that distractions had become far less disturbing. Rex would, sometimes, glance in the direction of a disturbance but resumed or continued the work immediately. This was in contrast to the session of February 18, 1957 when Rex's attention strayed to campus activities and, on February 21, when he got up and closed the door to shut out distracting sounds. This seemed to indicate a gain in ability to concentrate.

The tutor found an emotional release in recording the highs and lows in the tutoring sessions. Setting the goal of letting the situation develop and making a factual account of it, followed by an evaluation, provided a feeling of security in maintaining a sense of balance of the hopes and fears that grew out of the action study.

Rex needs the individual approach for some time to come. He needs support when difficulties become too great for him. Continued over a long enough period, he could gain the confidence in himself that he needs. "You were right the first time," is a remark which the tutor found herself saying many times and felt that, in time, he could overcome the hesitations, the backward glances, the repetition that had been slowing the rate of reading.

It is important that those working with Rex accept his limitations and give him freedom to work in the area of his abilities. Rex had a well established antipathy toward reading which must be taken into account but there is a possibility of a

slow change.

The informal test on January 10, 1957 and the Metropolitan Reading test on April 1, 1957 had all of the characteristics of the initial Durrell Analysis test administered on November 28, 1956, except the attitude. The tension and attempts to evade the situation that were present at the time of the first test were absent on the latter two. It is recommended that at intervals further testing be done. There is the possibility that with the gradual removal of "blocks," the testing will reveal latent capabilities.

In conclusion, it would seem that for Rex to develop in the field, reading should be kept as free from tension as possible and that he be helped to feel increasingly secure in what he knows. He must experience success in all areas: word recognition, a developing demand for meaning in what he reads, and application of what he reads to worthwhile situations. Every effort should be made to relate reading to his interests in the hope of helping him to learn to like to read. It must be remembered that the meaning difficulties encountered in many content textbooks are so numerous, and often so subtle, that Rex will need help to keep from slipping back into those negative and passive attitudes previously noted.

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APPENDIX I

Conferences with the Adviser*

February 5, 1957

Action study, Stephen Corey, a specialist.

Set up the problem

Propose a plan of action

Try the plan or plans

Gain evidence

Write the results

Major limitations,

- one child
- subjective
- difficulty of the project
- new

Case History

- use anonymous name for the child, one name throughout.

Use terms,

- the examiner,
- the researcher,
- the results were, etc.

*This section shows the way in which the problem was developed with the adviser.

Selected Bibliography - what has been helpful as well as
sources cited.

Anecdotal

Descriptive

Organize

Results of action research, by groups,

Children's Social Values.

Arthur W. Foshay, Kenneth D. Wann and Associates. New York:
Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications.
1954.

Cooperative Procedures in Learning.

Alice Miel and Associates. New York: Teachers College,
Columbia University, Bureau of Publications. 1952.

1. What they learned.
2. The way they went about learning it.

Date	Record	Analysis
	What happened	Reactions
	Pupil's actions	What we did

The following procedure was agreed upon:

1. Problem definition.
2. Thorough and critical research for promising solutions.
3. Discriminating and thoughtful introduction to change.
4. Accumulation of evidence. Data.
5. Results.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

February 12, 1957

It was mentioned that the tutoring subject was puzzling.

Adviser: "That is the fascination of education."

Advisee: "That is the complexity of it."

Adviser recommended -

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development,
Research for Curriculum Improvement. NEA 1957 Yearbook.

Read Section Three first, "The Researcher as a Person."
pp. 153-186.

Advisee mentioned the amount of time it takes for this kind of work.

The adviser's reaction was immediate and warm, "Too much?"

"No! Just feel impatient that for the amount of time spent the amount of work produced seems so small."

February 19, 1957

Adviser set time limits.

To guard against too hurried a finish.

Finish first two problems in four weeks.

1. Problem definition.
2. Thorough and critical research for promising solutions.

Can check progress against the problem.

Data in relation to the problem.

Negative or positive. Let the situation develop.

Finish first draft in ten weeks.

This is an on-going program. Cannot be completed.

RECORD

ANALYSIS

Adviser again mentioned that there is no known previously completed individual action research available as a guide.

Pioneering.

Results are recommendations.
Cannot be conclusions.
Avoid use of the word.

Adviser cautioned against expecting too much and that hopes color the evaluation.

Care in interpreting data is particularly important, since it is in this part of a research study that an investigator is most subject to the dangers of wishful thinking and lack of suspended judgment. Researchers, like all other people, tend to become emotionally identified with the fruits of their labor, and are tempted to see implications which are not completely justified. The extent to which an investigator resists the tendency to overgeneralize is the measure of confidence he can legitimately feel in his results. It may also indicate the extent to which his findings will be acceptable and meaningful to other members of his profession.¹

Adviser expressed approval of report of the first conference.

Advisee said that all the data came from the adviser who did not recognize that in informal discussion her thinking had been so logical.

March 5, 1957

Question: Is the keeping of a day-by-day record of value

The advisee felt that trying to make a candid appraisal of the

¹Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA. Research for Curriculum Improvement. (Washington 6, D.C.: A.S.C.D., a department of the National Education Association, 1957). p. 137.

RECORD

to the advisee in the tutoring project?

ANALYSIS

tutoring situation was the best way in which she could develop confidence and grow as a teacher.

Record keeping:

- caused her to do more serious thinking and become, consequently, more alert to the child's needs,
- created a change in her attitude. Concepts of pace and desired accomplishments became less absolute,
- helped her to capitalize on the student's sense of values. She learned better when to let the student direct the activity so as to benefit from it and when to assume control in the direction of motivation.

The action research report was started on February 5, 1957.

The report of previous work was reconstructed in flash-backs to bring it up to date. Reconstruction was based on the case history and a daily written record.

Question: Is this project of help to the child in learning to read?

The advisee was not able to answer this at this time. The adviser had not yet read the daily record of the tutoring project. The question then became: Would the adviser be able to detect signs of improvement?

March 12, 1957

In the conference, action research was again assessed as a unique activity. The importance of freedom to grow in the ability to do action research was discussed. This provided some needed confidence.

The method of maintaining balance between objectivity and subjectivity in the work with the child was reviewed. Practices that may have an effect of cruelty to children were discussed and deplored.